Research Proposal of The Thesis Entitled

Investigating Northeastern Indian Literature: An Ecofeminist Examination of Contemporary Women Writers

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(January, 2025)

Introduction

Ecofeminism is the core topic through which we are able to co-relate between women and nature. It spotlights the same factors which exploit the women such as patriarch, colonization, capitalism, and industrialization contributes to the exploitation of nature. The various environmental injustices, along with the social-cultural dynamic norms in the varied communities, experienced by the women and the non-binary community leading to the term "ecofeminism" in the 1970s and 1980s.

The word 'ecofeminism' was first discovered, and coined by a French feminist Francoise d'Eaubonne. This book explores the relationship between ecology and feminism in her book *Le Feminisme Ou La mort* (d'Eaubonne,1974). It sums up the connection between the exploitation of women based on casteism, class, creed, sex, race and nature. The term deals with two concepts in a single word, which are interdisciplinary, ecology and feminism.

In India, ecofeminism is deeply linked to the theorist, physicist, and environmental activist Vandana Shiva in her famous work *Staying Alive: Woman, Ecology and Development* (1989). She talks about the feminine principal "Prakriti" (nature). She emphasizes maldevelopment which is caused by the debasement of women and nature. She also points out the systemic exploitation of women and nature in her works. Anthropologist, Sherry Ortner, in her seminal essay "Is Female to Male as Nature is to Culture?" (1974). which is a part of book named *Woman, culture, and Society* (1974) states a universal perception that women are comparatively more familiar to the nature than men, as observed in everyday life, especially in the rural regions. Ecofeminism highlights the deep correlation between the injustice of nature and the suppression of women.

Ecology is associated with feminism by postulating that women's exploitation is linked to the same points that exploit the world around them. The same way, man buys land only for their satisfaction the way they do to women. Therefore, this study is going to focus on the ecofeminism from the point of view of northeast Indian writers. Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, Nagaland, Mizoram, Manipur which are often referred as the '7 sisters' and in terms of ecology these states are not lagging behind. These regions have rich ecological system and beautiful landscapes which contribute in these research topics (Das 2022).

Introduction to the Author and the Works

Indra Goswami, an author of Assamese literature, received The Gyan Pith award (2000) for providing her great knowledge to the subject. She was deeply engaged over the terror, disorder, and depression in the lower standards of the society. Her book *The Blue-Necked God* (1976), was translated by Gayatri Bhattacharyya in English (2013), where the novel revolves around the main concerns of nature happening to the women (widows) in Brindavan.

Another work by Goswami is *The Man from Chinnamasta* (2006), translated by Prashant Goswami. The story is about the man-made animal sacrifices occurring at the Kamakhya temple, Assam. This novel is set forward to opposes the brutality of animals and social evils by displaying a story of the Chinnamasta Jatadhari, Ratnadhar, and Dorothi Brown, a woman from England in Assam.

Mitra Phukan is another famous author in this study. She is a columnist, translator, and reputed author. Her work, *The Collector's Wife* (2005), narrates the life of a childless upper-middle-class woman and addition to some interesting facts about society, how women oppress other women when provided the opportunity. The novel also covers the agitation of native people against the government, and different local movements in northeast India.

Jahnavi Barua an Assamese uprising author, she undertakes a lot of NGOs along with the social norms leading to diverse points of view in her novel *Rebirth* (2010). In the novel, she describes the duality in the households and the gender inequality. The story revolves around Kaberi, whose husband cheats on her, assuming she's infertile and unable to produce offsprings. Barua creatively displays the emotional distress and the abuse; Kaberi has to go through, while also covers the natural beautiful environment of the northeast India.

Undertow (2020) is another latest work by Barua. The story hinges on a young woman, who marries a man from a different caste and the aftermath which devastated the relations between themselves and their relatives, while adding the evilness and toxicity of society despite being set in 21st century.

Literature Review

This research have been conducted on Indian north-eastern English literature, especially when it comes to feminism and ecological studies. In this study, Bolla Madhvi "Decolonizing Nature: and In-depth Analysis of Eco-Feminism" (2023), Madhvi summarized decolonizing in research and exploring the deep inter-rooted relationship between environmental prejudice and gender

norms, by approaching a historical context and its impact while analyzing the critiques along with the enriched perspective of an eco-feminist. She spotlights the centering indigenous works, and environmental justice with the capitalization norms by providing concrete evidence examples and in-depth experiences, and how the social norms contribute immense role in the development and awareness of ecofeminism.

This study by Bhuvaneswari Vijayaraj "A Comprehensive Study of Ecofeminism" (2017), the research focuses on androcentrism and ecological balance. The main focus is the impact of environmental justice accentuates and deeply impacts the persona and emphasizes the social justice and sacredness of the earth. She emphasizes that raising awareness of ecofeminism will only bring harmony and humbleness to nature and make the earth greener and pollution-free by connecting more with it, this ensures the oneness of nature. She advocates bringing back the old norms and the principle, with which males and females used to live with equal capitalism and morals.

In the study "Ecofeminism at the Crossroads in India: A Review" (2012), Manisha Rao describes the overconsumption of natural resources and its effects on the global eco-political issues. She discusses the struggles of modernization in the field of agriculture, and the oppression of natural resources through man-made industries along with the struggles of the low-standard society which includes poor families of the rural areas. Rao also highlights that women are victims of society and the adverse effects of the indigenous class gender system with the increasing opposition in society.

In the research study "Eco-Feminism in The Select Novels of Anita Nair, Kamala Markandaya and Manju Kapur" (2016), Satyanand Kadu Nakhod, his main objective is the detailed study of eco-feminism and how women, often unintentionally defend for the same in the patriarchal society in the novels of Anita Nair, Kamala Markandaya and Manju Kapur. She describes the oppression of women in society and the same patterns led in the family which may interfere with the empowerment and development of society in addition to eco-feminism.

In this research by Kamble Mukesh Vilas on "Ecofeminism in Canadian and American context with special reference to select works of Margaret Atwood and Alice Walker" (2019), where he discusses the term eco-feminism and its alternative derivatives from the modern literature point of view. On further journalism on the same, Kamble examines impacts of the terms such as 'nature', 'ecology' and 'self-identity' and its contribution to the Canadian and

the American literature. He also explains the scopes and perspectives, of several eco-feminism writers and the struggles of American and Canadian authors in the literature world.

This study by Mr. Sarfraj Osman Sayyad, "The Portrayal of Ecofeminism in The Select Indian Fiction: A Study" (2023). The main purpose of this study is to examine the theme of ecofeminism, in the works of authors like Arundhati Roy and Sarah Joseph along with understanding the women's perspective and psychology in the novels. Protagonist embody, the mindset of revolutionaries, rebels, and rational thinkers while still portraying their real sense of identity. He mentions, how women are often objectified and criticized, for their positions in modern society and the marginalized colony. He also explores the role of a woman within the Indian family**.**

Plan of study

This research circulates around the theme of ecofeminism, led by the Indian northeastern writers. They perceive the term, through their own background and environment shapes their understanding of the subject and displaying in brief. This research summarizes, by introducing the subject and then accentuates in-depth, the perspective of a women's relationship with the nature and how it impacts the society in terms of gender-neutral concept.

The study also shows the impact of ecofeminism, in the early days of modernization and the circumstances this pattern is going to lead in the future, while also focusing on the norms of the patriarchal system where women are often suppressed.

These novels include Jahnavi Barua's *Rebirth* (2010) and, *Undertow* (2020). Mitra Phukan's *The-Collector's-wife* (2005) Indira Goswami's *The Blue Necked-God* (2013) and *The Man from Chinnamasta* (2006) play a crucial role in understanding this research and how it frames the subject.

Objectives of Study

The main purpose is to understand in-depth about women residing in the northeastern state of India, through their prominent novels and books. On fact-checking the authors indeed overshadow the issue and the impacts related to ecofeminism, the aftermath of the recent upgrades, in the north-eastern states which includes natural regions and the ecological, geographical changes contributes to the ecofeminism. While this research observes, the evaluation of the story and characters, which also enlightens north-east India's advancement in the modern English literature and novels.

While understanding the constructive themes of eco-feminism, taking place in the novels along with the repression of women and related issues. When focusing on the few selected writings, of the repetitive patterns and the themes. This also displays an outline manner of problematic issues of the critical subsidization and marginalized functioning on the topics of eco-feminism in case of the North Eastern Indian literature.

Research Methodology

This research study, provides the methodological pattern recognition of ecofeminism in North Eastern writings while focusing on select novels as primary sources such as *Rebirth* (2010), *Undertow* (2020), *The-Collector's-Wife* (2005), *and The Blue Necked-God* (2013), *The Man from Chinnamasta* (2006).

One of the most applied techniques is the detailed textual study from different publications, articles and authentic internet sources. This study compares the novels being talked about, along with the main theme. The study on the context of the social and historical context in the states of northeast, India and the manner it implies on the subject of ecofeminism.

Scope

The given investigation displays the conceptual strategy for the findings of ecofeminism in literatures and novel and study the nature and its relationship with woman in particular books. This study summarizes over the view of ecofeminism and the other norms which leads to certain an expectation and the patriarchy system. This paper identifies a subtle pattern and understanding of how the eco-feminism and the socio-culture background impact the North-east Indian authors.

Limitations

The study focuses on selected novels and numerous amounts of books might have been excluded from the discussion on the current topic. There are cultural diversities in northeastern India which creates a vast area which is difficult to cover and not often brought up in debates and discussions, which makes it challenging to recognise all perspectives and therefore underrepresented.

Tentative-Chapter-Scheme:

Chapter 1: Overview

Chapter 2: An Ecofeminism Investigation in the novel The Blue-Necked God and The Man from Chinnamasta

Chapter 3: An Ecofeminism Scanning of The Collector's Wife

Chapter 4: Exploring Ecofeminism in Undertow and Rebirth

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Chapter-Wise Outline:

Chapter 1: The research proposal begins with exploring the concept of the main context of ecofeminism and then proceeds to understand the topic discussed in the selected novels. The main purpose of the subject connects the authors of the northeastern writers of India, violence against women, animals, and nature.

Chapter 2: In this chapter examines the subjective of the topic and compare the two different novels, *The Blue Necked God* and *The Man From Chinnamasta*, co-relating them and the exploitation in the natural phenomenon of the environment as well as women in socio-cultural context.

Chapter 3: In this chapter, the narration of the disrupted and tormented life a woman experience, in the household of *The Collector's Wife* and the emotional tantrum she is lead into.

Chapter 4: This chapter revolves around the theme in the novels *Rebirth* and *Undertow* and the relationship of women with nature and its implications, the social economical norms which shapes the society in the novels of the north-eastern writing of India.

Chapter 5: (Conclusion) The final chapter sums up the theme and the subject matter, along with the advantages and the limitations the subject holds, in the context of northeastern India and its relevance in the society.

This research is presented to provide a comprehensive understanding on the subject of eco-feminism from the states mentioned earlier. While addressing these points, it is important to consider both sexes equally as well as its necessary, for greater participation of women in the

modernization efforts. Their involvement is important for the progressing society, and providing a strong foundation for future generation.

Ecofeminism, thereby is still considered a taboo in various societies and remains unaccepted in many regions. The subject remains an underrated factor, for the development of modern society and women as an individual, environmental advocacy and human rights. Promoting education plays a vital role for the success of women in the respective field.

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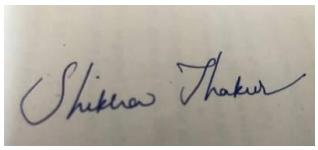

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